

## National Children's Dental Health Month Fact Sheet

National Children's Dental Health Month began as a one-day event in Cleveland, Ohio, on February 3, 1941. During that year, February 3 – 7 was designated as Children's Dental Health Week in Akron, Ohio.

The American Dental Association held the first national observance of Children's Dental Health Day on February 8, 1949. The single day observance became a weeklong event in 1955. And in 1981, the program was extended to a month-long celebration known today as National Children's Dental Health Month.

Since 1941, the observance has grown from a two-city event into a nationwide program. NCDHM messages reach millions of people in communities across the country and at numerous armed service bases. Local observances often include poster, coloring and essay contests, health fairs, free dental screenings, museum exhibits, classroom presentations and dental office tours.

The theme for this year's campaign is ***"Turn Up Your Smile Power!"*** The American Dental Association produces a program planning kit for its state and local dental societies, dental alliances and armed forces dental clinics to assist them in local health campaign efforts.

The ADA distributes press kits and public service announcements for television and radio to educate the public and enhance promotional efforts. Additional information appears on the ADA's Web site, [www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org).

Attitudes and habits established at an early age are critical in maintaining good oral health throughout life. By participating in the annual celebration of National Children's Dental Health Month, members of the dental team, parents, teachers and others can help keep children's smiles beautiful now and for years to come.